Africa's Security Issues Through 2010

William Thom

PROSPECTS FOR AFRICA over the next 10 years hinge on the continent's severe security problems. Peace is the foundation for Africa's future because all goals for development, plans for good governance and alleviation of human suffering depend on a secure and stable environment. South of the Sahara, Africa suffers from a vicious cycle of poverty, which contributes to criminal and political violence that inhibits investment and discourages economic development. One in three sub-Saharan states is currently experiencing some form of military conflict.

Abject poverty is at the root of many African conflicts, and the number of risk takers willing to take up arms to claim their piece of the meager economic pie is growing. The global communications revolution fuels rising expectations, and as Africans realize the depths of their poverty for the first time, they are losing patience with ineffective political leaders and traditional rulers—opportunities for economic advancement are painfully beyond their grasp. Poorly governed states with weak or uncontrollable armies face collapse.

Concern for basic safety is another factor. When a state can no longer protect its citizens, its primary reason to exist ceases; individuals will seek protection elsewhere. Insecurity fans ethnic, religious and regional animosities, even where differences have long been beneath the surface. When all else fails, individuals fall back on their tribal unit, encouraging the rise of warlords, often based on ethnic affiliations.

Another major change in Africa's security calculus has occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War: African countries are now setting their own security agendas. After more than 100 years of colonial domination and Cold War distortion, Africans are taking charge of events around the continent. Africans sense a waning security commitment from traditional external powers—their former colonial rulers and Cold War partners.

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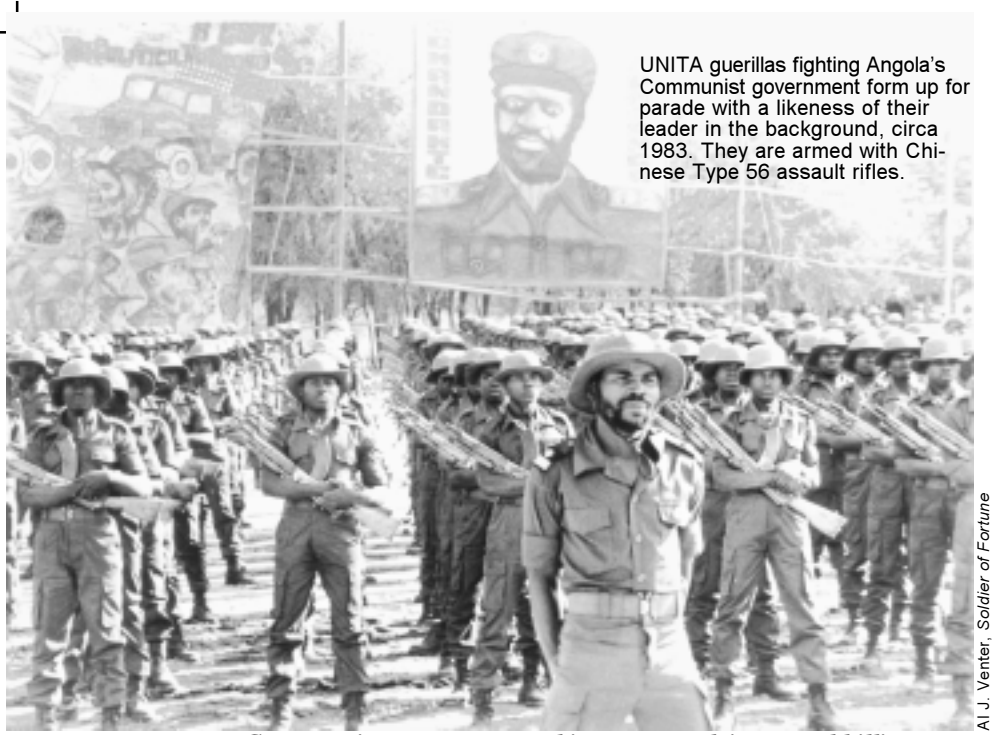
France's more constrained role recently as the self-styled "gendarme of Africa" is instructive. Paris's unilateral intervention in Rwanda in 1994 brought accusations that France had sided with the Hutu against the Tutsi. Two years later, when longtime French ally Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko faced a serious rebellion supported by an alliance of regional states, Paris demurred. The inaction sent a message that there were new, more restrictive limits to French intervention in Africa.

Today's African leaders see a new freedom to act militarily. On the positive side, African states are more inclined to take responsibility for solving African security problems. In the post-Cold War era, some 20 countries have participated in peacekeeping and peacemaking operations on the continent, mostly on their own. On the negative side, this new freedom has also fostered military adventures that have complicated regional security problems.

Sub-Saharan Africa's position in the post-Cold War global security constellation is emerging. The continent has unfinished business from the Cold War and even the colonial period. In this land of mostly small internal wars, a limited military investment can potentially yield immense profits. Among the numerous weak states with poor armies and fragile institutions, even a small war can generate great destruction, as in Somalia and Sierra Leone. In 10 years Africa will likely still be at war with itself,



UNITA guerillas fighting Angola's Communist government form up for parade with a likeness of their leader in the background, circa 1983. They are armed with Chinese Type 56 assault rifles.

Al J. Venter, *Soldier of Fortune*

Communist powers poured in troops, advisors and billions of dollars of conventional weaponry in a vain attempt to preserve their perceived strategic gains in these two anchor countries. To balance the ledger, the West provided military assistance to professed anticommunist "freedom fighters" in Angola, and such anti-Marxist bulwarks as Zairian President Mobutu.

continuing the process of nation-building, as relatively strong, stable states survive, and weak, hopelessly fractured ones do not. What follows are some key military themes that will help shape African realities over the next 10 years.

Warfare in the Era of Independence

Since the end of World War II, there have been three identifiable periods of warfare in sub-Saharan Africa. They span the spectrum of combat from guerrilla wars to coalition warfare, but with insurgency as a constant. During this period, an estimated 3.5 million soldiers and civilians have perished in African conflicts. The first period involved wars of liberation against the colonial powers, which extended well into the 1970s. These armed insurgencies against the remaining colonial powers were essentially low-budget, small-scale conflicts backed by communist powers. But, other revolts against colonialism did not align with the communist cause and—at least initially—did not receive significant support from Moscow. Examples from the 1950s and 60s include the Mau Mau revolt in Kenya, the early uprising in Angola and the Eritrean independence struggle. In Southern Africa there were wars of national liberation to end white-dominated settler regimes.

The second period involved the appearance of a few interstate wars and large-scale civil wars that were militarily significant, mostly conventional and politically galvanizing. By the 1970s a number of African states had developed armies capable of projecting power across their borders. The two best examples of African interstate conflict during this period were the Ogaden War between Ethiopia and Somalia (1977-78), and the Tanzania-Uganda War (1978-79). White-ruled South Africa pursued a forward-defense strategy during the 1970s and 1980s, which resulted in episodic combat with black-ruled states to the north. In Angola, however, Pretoria's apartheid government deployed conventional forces in strength to fight Angolan and Cuban forces. Two pivotal states where communist regimes had come to power in the 1970s—Ethiopia and Angola—faced large-scale civil wars in the 1980s. Communist powers poured in troops, advisors and billions of dollars of conventional weaponry in a vain attempt to preserve their perceived strategic gains in these two anchor countries. To balance the ledger, the West provided military assistance to professed anticommunist "freedom fighters" in Angola, and such anti-Marxist bulwarks as Zairian President Mobutu.

By the post-Cold War 1990s, however, a third period had emerged, one that points toward the next decade. The significant wars have once again become mainly internal contests fought at the unconventional or semiconventional level, leading to state collapse and wars of intervention. Easy to finance and difficult to defend against, guerrilla warfare—long the bane of Africa—remains its most prevalent form of conflict. Today's vicious insurgencies differ from yesterday's armed liberation movements in motivation: current struggles are based on power and economics, not a political cause or ideology. In weak states with unprofessional, underpaid armies, armed bandits become armed insurgents as they fill the power vacuum.

War in the 1990s became more destructive as internecine conflicts destroyed already fragile infrastructures. Today's African insurgents tend to be better armed and out number their 1960s predecessors. As the distinctions between guerrilla warfare and organized banditry blur, the targets often become the people themselves. Prolonged internal wars can destroy the fabric of the state and the society. On a continent where the majority of the

population is no more than 15 years old, the communications revolution has highlighted the enormous gap between rich and poor. Youth without hope in dysfunctional nation states provide a ready manpower pool for local warlords; elsewhere, children are kidnapped out of villages by roving insurgent bands. The result can be young combatants socialized by an intensely violent right of passage, who begin to see banditry, murder and pillaging as normal behavior.

For African states the present is a time of experimentation with the uses and limits of applying military force. The next 10 to 20 years will bring polarized military power on the subcontinent and a small but growing number of strong states increasingly willing to use military force. Conventional wars will be fought over resources such as oil, other minerals, water and arable land, and to determine regional dominance. Armed insurgency will prevail in many of the weaker states, much as it does now, with regional powers or power blocs selectively intervening to protect their vital interests, often merely the capital and valuable resources in the interior. Eventually, power blocs will give way to dominant subregional military powers willing to engage in conflict, which will frequently take the form of peace enforcement and counterinsurgency.

International Committee of the Red Cross

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An Uneven Balance

Nearly all postcolonial African armies began as colonial adjuncts to European armies and served primarily as tripwire forces in the colonies. As such, they were lightly armed and dependent on their colonial power for training, logistics and leadership. For example, the Kenyan African Rifles descended from the King's African Rifles. Over the past 40 years these armies grew to resemble, on a smaller scale, the forces of their colonial rulers or Cold War patrons.

Throughout this period, there have been great inequities in the military capabilities of African states. Until the mid-1990s, power imbalances have been held in check by the threat of intervention by powers external to Africa. During the Cold War in particular, these external powers intervened militarily to reverse adverse security trends or at least level the playing field. Soviets and Cubans intervened in Angola to balance South African intervention in 1975, and France worked to form a posse of African states to save the Mobutu regime in Zaire in 1977 and 1978.

By Western standards, today's African armies are still lightly armed, poorly equipped and trained, and dependent on external military aid. Nevertheless, a growing number of states–notably Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe–are capable of using military force to pursue their own interests on the continent because of the gross inequities in raw military power. In a conventional scenario a country with a few operational jet fighters or attack helicopters and 30 armored vehicles backed by artillery has an immense advantage over a country that can oppose it with only light infantry units. Without an external or effective regional brake on their activities, emergent local powers can and will take the military option when they believe their vital interests are at stake.

Angola, for example, used its experienced army to intervene once in Congo-Brazzaville and twice in Congo-Kinshasa in the late 1990s to effect outcomes that it perceived as beneficial relative to its struggle with the insurgent Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Nigeria managed

to field a force up to division size in Liberia and then in Sierra Leone to pursue regional peace enforcement and its own hegemony in West Africa. Zimbabwe also deployed a division-sized force into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and South Africa (along with Botswana) sent troops into Lesotho to quell disturbances there. Uganda's army fought in three neighboring states in the 1990s—Rwanda, Sudan and the DRC. Rwanda has launched its forces into the DRC twice in recent years, and Ethiopia mobilized a force of 250,000 for its border war with Eritrea and continues to pursue hostile elements into the former Somalia.

In 10 years Africa will likely still be at war with itself, as it continues the process of nation-building, as relatively strong, stable states survive, and weak, hopelessly fractured ones do not. What follows are some key military themes that will help shape African realities over the next 10 years.

The next few years promise little change in this military inequity. In 10 to 20 years the gap between the few dominant military powers and the rest of the countries will likely grow exponentially. Among the stronger states, large infantry forces will give way to smaller, more mobile forces with greater reach and firepower. The most capable states will maintain a variety of forces tailored for specific missions such as power projection, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and counterinsurgency. While the best sub-Saharan armies will grow more impressive, they will remain several generations behind the global leaders.

Regional Powers and Power Blocs

The original continental organization—the Organization of African Unity (OAU)—organized around the principle of decolonizing Africa. But it did not have a mandate to intervene as a regional military organization or adjudicate military disputes. Thus, in the post-Cold War period continental power blocs have begun to develop and act in conjunction with the OAU. They stem mostly from economic unions, the best example being the Economic Community of West African States and its military arm, the Economic Community of West African States Cease Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Dominated by regional power Nigeria, ECOMOG has served in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, earning both respect and ridicule. Elsewhere, the Southern Africa Development Community, bolstered by South Africa, has assumed a regional security role, but its unity has been strained by sharp disagreement over Zimbabwe and Namibia's involvement in the DRC. On the Horn of Africa, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development has engaged in diplomatic conflict resolution in Sudan but lacks any military cooperation among it members. The East African Cooperation—composed of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda—has conducted joint military exercises. Some groupings appear to be ad hoc and temporary, such as the "Frontline States of East Africa" (Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea) which foundered when the Ethiopia-Eritrea border war erupted in 1998. The "Great Lakes Powers" of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi have acted as an informal bloc in the DRC war, although tensions between Kigali and Kampala resulted in a shout-out at Kisangani in 1999.

Other groupings will likely emerge and some extant groupings rearrange themselves to accommodate changing national interests among members. Power blocs attempt to deal with collective regional security concerns as Africans see themselves increasingly on their own. They see viral forms of economic insurgency and highly destructive internal wars that disregard borders and appear out of control. Responsible leaders band together fearing that these conflicts, left unchecked, could destroy states and create pockets of complete lawlessness. The OAU, by its inaction, encourages the development of such subregional groupings. The OAU has only a token military mechanism, and prefers to endorse military interventions by others rather than take the lead itself. Recently, however, the OAU has shown signs of becoming more active by playing a prominent role in helping negotiate an end to the Ethiopia-Eritrea dispute and by sponsoring a joint military commission in the DRC.

Regional power blocs are only as solvent and effective as the powers that lead them. In sub-Saharan Africa few states are powerful enough to lead now. South Africa and Nigeria are the two best-known military leaders in the sub-Saharan region. Both face severe internal challenges but should maintain their roles as regional powers, and in the long run they have the potential to become continentwide powers. Such a development could lead to recolonization by African powers although the context would be different from the European experience. Pretoria and Abuja, for example, could develop hegemonic tendencies; one could argue that Nigeria already has. Beyond these two countries, predicting other major developing powers is difficult. Among those that could emerge over the next decade or so are Kenya, Angola, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and perhaps Senegal. Even small countries such as Rwanda and Eritrea have already shown an ability to project

force and influence the local military balance.

A proving ground for budding regional powers will be peace enforcement missions and other military interventions in failed states. Peacekeeping may become a lost art in Africa in this century. Namibia and Mozambique have been relative UN successes, but Sierra Leone, Angola, Somalia and Liberia have shown limited returns for expensive peacekeeping ventures. Military interventions in collapsed states will continue, but they are apt to be police actions to ward off insurgents or multinational struggles for resources. The DRC case applies here. The imbalance in military capabilities will not be redressed over the next decade and will likely become more pronounced.

Joint Combat Camera

A US Marine stacks boxloads of weapons during Operation *Restore Hope*, Mogadishu, Somalia.

A half-dozen or so sub-Saharan states manufacture light arms, and their production far exceeds their own needs. Small arms are difficult to track, yet one commercial airliner can carry enough of them and their ammunition to start a guerrilla war. That is precisely why the trade in light weapons is so dangerous. The current glut of small arms in Africa should gradually contract over the next 10 to 20 years as the millions of small arms delivered in the 1970s and 80s age, become unserviceable and are not replaced in such quantities.

Arms Trade Trends

Arms acquisition is occurring on three levels—light arms, heavy stock-in-trade items and more sophisticated weapon systems. The extremely active trade in small arms and other light infantry weapons has captured international attention since the Cold War because they help fuel local wars around the continent. These light weapons include small arms, machineguns, rocket propelled grenade launchers and small-caliber mortars—all man-portable.

These weapons have three principal origins. During the Cold War millions of assault rifles and other firearms were pumped into Africa, mostly by communist powers equipping "allies," notably Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia and Sudan. Rifles such as the AK-47 have become so numerous that they are regarded as a form of currency in some places. Second, in the post-Cold War era a brisk trade has developed, through middlemen, to acquire light arms from the former Soviet Union and other East European countries where such weapons are now cheap and plentiful. Third, a half-dozen or so sub-Saharan states manufacture light arms, and their production far exceeds their own needs.

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The trade in heavy weapons and large pieces of military equipment increased in the late 1990s with the growing number of conflicts on the continent and the unprecedented number of countries participating in military operations. Throughout 1998 and 1999 African armies deployed to other African nations 19 times, while 17 countries experienced significant combat on their territory. These deployments included armored vehicles, artillery, surface-to-air missiles, and combat and transport aircraft. These weapon systems, although not new to the sub-Saharan scene, are now frequently upgraded versions of old classics. The T-55 tank, for example, is now available with reactive armor, night vision equipment and the ability to fire antitank missiles from its main gun. MiG-21 and MiG-23 fighter-bombers are now frequently upgraded with better avionics, power plants, weapon suites and other performance enhancements. Other popular items of equipment in the 1990s include infantry fighting vehicles, hand-held surface-to-air missiles, multiple rocket launchers, and combat and transport

helicopters—most of Soviet design. The next decade will likely see modest growth in the delivery of heavy weapons to sub-Saharan Africa. Although some observers consider armor and combat aircraft inappropriate for African wars, countries that have recently acquired them are shopping for more. For example, the T-55 is now a prime player in wars from the Horn to Angola, from Rwanda to Guinea. Mi-24 HIND attack helicopters are popular as a counterinsurgency and close-air-support platform, and are used by a dozen African countries.

Most big-ticket purchases still happen through government agencies, and the dollar costs still overwhelmingly favor state-to-state transactions, but the business going to arms peddlers is increasing. This is a troubling development because the independent dealers are motivated strictly by profit, will sell to anyone—insurgents as well as governments—and care little about the consequences.

In the late 1990s a new generation of military equipment began to appear in the sub-Saharan region—much of it aviation. The Ethiopia-Eritrea border war has brought Su-27 and MiG-29 fighters, a first for the region. At least a few other countries, such as Angola and Nigeria, will probably acquire these and other new-generation aircraft over next the two to three years. Ethiopia has also received the 2S19 152mm self-propelled artillery system, a quantum leap in sophistication over the post-World War II designed artillery commonly found in Africa. With no Cold War restraints, African countries can successfully seek the next level of sophisticated weaponry.

How can African states afford these arms? The Cold War's military equipment grant aid and easy credit terms are over. The few large or wealthy African countries are understandably in the market for major equipment acquisition. But smaller, poorer countries, driven by perceived threats or the fact that they are already embroiled in a conflict, are also in the arms market. Imaginative financing, such as barter agreements and concessions, makes predictions about who can afford future arms highly speculative.

Black and gray market arms dealers further complicate the scenario as they increasingly replace the classic state-to-state arms deals. Most big-ticket purchases still happen through government agencies, and the dollar costs still overwhelmingly favor state-to-state transactions, but the business going to arms peddlers is increasing. This is a troubling development because the independent dealers are motivated strictly by profit, will sell to anyone—insurgents or governments—and care little about the consequences.

The Question of Privatization

The longstanding reliance on mercenaries will likely continue as African state and substate actors contract out military services to dramatically improve their capabilities. The privatization of state security functions provides African countries with a force multiplier—a cheaper, quicker, albeit controversial, solution for a flagging military. Contractors can be more responsive than states in helping a government. The South African firm Executive Outcomes (EO) was employed effectively in the mid-1990s in both Angola and Sierra Leone and is generally credited with helping to reverse the poor military postures of both governments. EO strayed into operations, however, bringing charges that it was merely a thinly disguised mercenary outfit. The difference between legitimate security contractor and illegal mercenary has blurred. In Africa, mercenaries are a loaded issue, yet many states see contractors as alternatives to Cold War security assistance programs.

State security functions are generally out-sourced in the areas of training, advisory assistance and logistics (maintenance is key deficiency in African militaries). Air transportation has become an especially critical area for privatization. Without contract air transport, many of the recent African engagements would not have been possible. In the current DRC war, air transport is considered the most costly expense for each side.

Security contractors cross the line and become mercenaries when they act as operators and fighters and not just as maintainers and teachers. They cross another line when they begin dealing with substate actors and not recognized governments. Security entrepreneurs may be increasingly willing to sell their services to insurgent movements, tribal militias, local warlords and even nongovernment organizations. While better-known security firms—such as MPRI and Sandline International—strive to foster a legitimate business image, other lesser-known, spin-off or free-lance groups are concerned only with the bottom line and will deal with just about anyone. It seems likely that private security activities will expand both above board and below. Security vendors selling to substate actors will further destabilize the region.

The new wave of interest in contracting and mercenary services stemmed primarily from arms dealers. When items are sold, package deals include

The South African Army's Ratel Mk 2 (*right*) is an improved version of the French Panhard AML armored car and mounts a 90mm semiautomatic quick-firing gun. Various improvements have been made to the vehicle based on operational experience in Namibia and long-range penetration raids in Angola. Employment of the South African G-6 155mm self-propelled howitzer (*below*) was instrumental in the siege of Cuito Cunanavale, Angola, by anticommunist UNITA forces.

International Armour Institute, South Africa

By Western standards, today's African armies are still lightly armed, poorly equipped and trained, and dependent on external military aid. Nevertheless, a growing number of states–notably Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe–are capable of using military force to pursue their own interests on the continent because of the gross inequities in raw military power.

trainers, technicians and advisors. From there it is a short leap to providing people to fight. While mercenary combat troops continue to show up occasionally in Africa, the next decade would seem to prize "technomercenaries," technicians who can keep equipment running and train the locals on how to use it, without actually pulling the trigger.

Prospects for Intrastate Wars

African military conflicts since the Cold War have again become almost exclusively internal affairs far more damaging to economic and social underpinnings than traditional interstate wars. The most prevalent forms of conflict in Africa are armed insurgency and civil war, with the latter often growing out of the former. Such unrest seems all but certain to persist over the next 10 years. The conditions that foster the development of economic insurgencies (extreme poverty, large pool of disenfranchised and disaffected youth, ethnic tensions and easy availability of arms) are likely to persist and may intensify. Dissident groups evolve from simple banditry to insurgent warfare as they become larger and more successful. Credos and manifestos are quickly manufactured to provide a fig leaf of political legitimacy. Eventually, insurgencies may become recognized as civil wars as the rebel chiefs acquire respectability as legitimate political leaders.

Almost all internal wars in Africa attract, or in some cases are created by, the meddling of outside powers. Every insurgency depends at some level on outside assistance, so internal struggles can be viewed as proxy wars disguised as internal conflicts. Weak states are vulnerable to collapse, and internal wars hasten the process. State collapse as defined here is not merely the failure of the machinery of government to work, as in Zaire under Mobutu; it is the complete breakdown of national government authority, as in Somalia under a gaggle of feuding warlords. National control disappears when the rot from within erodes the military to the point that it can no longer serve as the guardian of the state. Ironically, either unwise military downsizing, or worse, unwise rapid military mobilization, can exacerbate internal security problems. Armed groups opposing the government, or merely oriented toward self defense, fill the

Current Conflicts

The DROC Civil War 1998-?

Status: Peace agreement signed, being violated by most signatories.

Type: Coalition civil war with extensive participation by foreign powers and substate actors.

Number of combatants: 120-140,000.

Displaced persons: 290,000.

Significant formations: Battalion, company.

Casualties: 20-27,000 (mostly civilian).

Tactics: Semiconventional (a mix).

Foreign involvement: Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Chad and Sudan for the government; Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi for the rebels.

Angolan Civil War 1998-?

Status: Lusaka Protocol violated by both sides, ongoing conflict.

Type: Latest phase of long running civil war.

Number of combatants: 150-180,000.

Displaced persons: over 1.4 million.

Significant formations: Brigade, regiment and battalion.

Casualties: Unknown (mostly civilian).

Tactics: Primarily conventional.

Foreign involvement: Private contract military assistance (both sides).

Sierra Leone Civil War 1991-?

Status: Peace agreement signed but being violated by rebel signatories.

Type: Brutal insurgency that has evolved into civil war.

Number of combatants: 30-40,000.

Displaced persons: 600,000+.

Significant formations: Battalion and company.

Casualties: over 10,000 (mostly civilian).

Tactics: Semiconventional (a mix).

Foreign involvement: West African force (headed by Nigeria) transitioning to a UN peacekeeping force for the government; Liberia and private contractors for rebels.

Ethiopia-Eritrea War 1998-?

Status: OAU/UN peace negotiations stalled, temporary lull in fighting.

Type: Large scale border war.

Number of combatants: 400,000.

Displaced persons: over 400,000.

Significant formations: Division, brigade and battalion.

Casualties: 30-45,000 killed (military).

Tactics: Conventional.

Foreign involvement: Contract personnel on both sides but primarily in Ethiopia.

void left by receding state power and create ethnic, regional or social networks. In this regard, the expanding number of paramilitaries (armed militias, political factions and ethnic self-defense forces) contributes to instability by increasing the number of armed substate actors with their own agendas. Further, these groups are susceptible to foreign manipulation. This dangerous form of internal warfare, characteristic of the 1990s, will likely be a major problem in Africa throughout the next decade.

It also seems that solvent, functioning African states will selectively intervene militarily to control insurgencies that either threaten neighboring countries or harbor dangerous elements, such as terrorist groups and radical fundamentalist movements. Strong African states and the subregional bodies they dominate will increasingly recognize danger signs such as the subdivision of insurgent forces into warlord gangs, the manipulation of rebel groups by outside interests seeking to capitalize on conflict and the emergence of a criminal empire in a lawless environment. Over the next decade Western powers will recognize that Africa's internal wars which destabilize some states and cause others to collapse, ultimately threaten their strategic interests as well. This lesson is not likely to be driven home, however, until some environmental or criminal disaster strikes that directly threatens Western interests.

Prospects for Interstate Wars

Wars between sovereign states in sub-Saharan Africa have taken place throughout the era of independence, but they have rarely been more than a regional concern. The Ogaden war between Ethiopia and Somalia gained notice because of the involvement of Cuban troops and Soviet advisors, but most interstate conflicts, like the five-day 1985 Christmas war between Mali and Burkina Faso, have been mere footnotes to modern African history. That may well change over the next 10 to 20 years as the militarily strong states attempt to stake out their areas of interest unintimidated by external powers.

A legitimate question is whether African states can afford to participate in interstate military contests. Countries in the Great Lakes region and on the Horn of Africa have shown a surprising and sobering ability to finance current military campaigns. Even in areas where oil, diamonds or other high-priced natural resources are not evident, countries find ways to pay for heavy, modern weapons. Financing African conflicts, especially conventional interstate wars, remains problematic, but the lack of resources is no reason to rule out future interstate wars.

In the sub-Saharan environment, a growing number of states have the raw military capability to engage in interstate wars, even when they do not involve an adjacent country. Contract air transport has

revolutionized warfare in Africa by giving countries strategic reach. Further, many of Africa's new dynamic leaders, such as Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni and Rwandan president Paul Kagame, who came to power by force of arms, tend to view military power as a legitimate—even preferred—tool of statecraft. Additionally, some old-line rulers, such as Angolan president José Eduardo dos Santos and Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe, also see flexing military muscle as an acceptable way to do business.

As regional powers become more active in the next decade, and their strategic interests become well defined, occasional interstate wars loom. While intrastate conflicts will remain the principal form of warfare, interstate warfare will be more likely than in the past 40 years. Some conflict may take the form of coalition warfare, such as that now underway in the DRC. Others will be more traditional one-on-one contests such as the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. The battle of wills and principles driving that dispute serve as a reminder that many wars are fought for symbolic and moral purposes. More future interstate wars in Africa are, however, likely to be fought over scarce or vanishing resources—and not just high-value commodities such as oil and diamonds. Water, fisheries, arable land and ethnic solidarity will be among the root causes of interstate wars. Borders established by the colonials will continue to become less relevant and more easily altered by Africa's emerging power structure.

Wars in Africa will stem from acute poverty and a sense of hopelessness among its burgeoning population, especially alienated young men. Fed by rising expectations stemming from increased media exposure, these wars will be primarily internal and unconventional. They will exact a high price on the people, the fragile infrastructures and the foundering states themselves. More states will collapse, be propped up by external powers from within Africa or be patrolled by international peacekeepers.

The disparities in military power on the African continent will become even greater. Emergent local powers and power blocs will be the significant military actors on the continent. As great powers limit their involvement, these emerging powers will pursue their own agendas that by 2010 will change Africa's political map.

The current scope of African military conflict is unprecedented. In the late 1990s sub-Saharan Africa may have entered into a "Thirty Years War," a metamorphic process that will profoundly change the continent. In some corners of Africa, the fires of war will remain difficult to extinguish for another reason: they have gone on for so long that they have attained a sense of normalcy. Entire generations in places such as Angola, Eritrea, Liberia and Somalia have grown up knowing nothing other than war.

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In Africa, as elsewhere, transnational criminality and war will become virtually indistinguishable. Economic insurgents, warlords for profit, lawless zones harboring criminals, armies of child soldiers and brutalized civilians will all offend the moral senses of Western nations and seemingly demand a response. Policing these messy situations will become an international priority. Nevertheless, some places will remain beyond the reach of Western moral consciousness and continue to experience low intensity conflict indefinitely.

The next two to three years do not portend much change in African security, but by 2010 Africa's political relief map will likely show stark differences. Islands of stability may be built around relatively strong and prosperous states such as South Africa, Kenya and perhaps Nigeria. In countries riven by insurgency and facing collapse, international forces protecting the capital may in effect create city-states. Elsewhere, local powers will demonstrate hegemonic interests, and geographic boundaries will reflect the continent's new political order. ***MR***

William G. Thom is the Defense Intelligence Officer for Africa, Defense Information Agency, Washington DC. He received a B.S. from the State University of New York at New Paltz and an M.A. from American University. He is a graduate of the US Army War College and the National Security Leadership Course. He has held a variety of positions in the DIA, including chief, Africa Military Capabilities Branch; senior analyst, Directorate for Estimates; and Africa analyst, J2. He has also served as senior analyst for Africa, J2, Headquarters, US European Command, Vaihingen, Germany.